

Housing Authority of the City of Long Beach

HAP CHECK NEWS

May 2004
Volume 9, Issue 5

Dear Landlords,

The Housing Authority is currently facing some challenges that are proving difficult to meet, and the outcomes will directly impact you. In the first place, it appears that Congress did not appropriate sufficient funds to cover the full cost of operating this year's housing assistance program, so we are forced to make some adjustments to the way we do business. What makes this particularly difficult is that Congress did not pass the budget until February of this year, well into the current fiscal year (which began in October 2003), and HUD just Thursday, April 22, issued guidance as to how the appropriation will be allocated to the housing authorities. As I write this, I still do not know our actual numbers. And here we are, more than half way through the fiscal year.

This means that we must cut the amount of money that we pay out in rental assistance. There is only one way to do that, and that is to lower the payment standards, which we have done. This means that the amount we will pay the landlord will decrease, while the amount the tenant pays will increase. These new rates are effective as we enter into new contracts, but they do not become effective for current contracts until the time of the participating families' second annual recertification.

This should not impact the rents you charge. As you know, the rents you charge are not tied to the payment standard. You should be able to get market rent for your units. It just means that the amount we pay will be less. We are also taking a very careful look at the rents you are requesting, so that we are sure not to authorize rents higher than rents you would charge in the private market place.

The new payment standards may mean that not everyone will qualify for your rent. You will remember that we cannot authorize a family to pay more than 40 percent of the family income for rent when they initially lease up. You



Deputy Executive Director, Lawrence D. Triesch and Housing Assistance Officer, Darnisa Tyler review HUD's budget.

should take this as a reminder of what we constantly say: Do not let anyone move into your unit until it has passed inspection and we have agreed upon the rent.

The second challenge facing us is that we are overleased: we have more vouchers in use at the current time than vouchers authorized. We need to allow for attrition to have it's effect so that we can reduce the program to it's proper size. This means that we are issuing no new vouchers; we are issuing vouchers only to existing participants who want to move to another unit. So if you are trying to lease to a Section 8 voucher holder, you may have a difficult time finding a family suitable for your unit.

That's not good news, for you, for us, or for our participating families. But we have no choice but to manage the program as responsibly as possible so we can continue to offer this service to our low-income population.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lawrence D. Triesch".

Lawrence D. Triesch

Deputy Executive Director



New Owner Orientation

New and existing owners are welcome to join us for a workshop designed to provide landlords with information about Section 8 rules and regulations and various Housing Authority processes and procedures. Mark your calendar and plan to attend on:

Date: Wednesday, May 12, 2004
Wednesday, August 11, 2004
Wednesday, November 10, 2004

Place: Long Beach Housing Authority
521 E. 4th St.
Long Beach, CA 90802

Time: 4:00 P.M. to 6:00 P.M.

Seating is Limited, so please RSVP by calling Karen Merritt at (562) 570-6880.



Report program abuse. Call the Fraud Hotline at (562) 570-6985, press 5.